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THE MISSION OF VICTORIA WILHELMINA

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BY

JEANNE BARTHOLOW MAGOUN

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To

My Four Sisters

and to

The Friends of Our Childhood

"Mabel and Kittie White"

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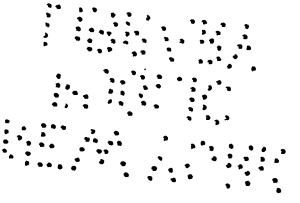

THE MISSION OF VICTORIA WILHELMINA

I.

NORRISVILLE, N. Y., *October* 1.

I HAVE just finished reading "The Woman in White" and I certainly do admire that girl for keeping a journal so faithful. Just think, she wrote it when she was almost dead. I always wanted to be a writer, but you can't expect to when you only went through the Grammar School, and not a very good one at that. Papa wouldn't let me go to High School as he thought I knew enough, so he let the hired girl go and I did the work. It wasn't hard and I won't judge the dead but I do wish I could have had a chance to be a writer. I

am going to start to-day and keep a mixture of a diary and an autobiography. I want to tell my past as well as what happens day by day.

On February twenty-second (Washington's birthday), 1891, I was born to my parents, Hiram and Sarah Wilson. They named me Ann. (I'm called Annie, I'm glad to say. I would give almost anything if I was named a fancy name like Beatrice or Gladys.) I was named after Aunt Ann and after all she didn't leave me a cent, only her silver spoons which turned out to be plated. Mama passed away when I was a little girl and I don't remember her much. Papa was of a cold and stern nature but, as I said, I won't judge the dead.

We always lived in Norrisville, New York State. It is a real nice place but narrow for a girl whose one ambition al-

ways has been to be broad minded. I was just getting kind of bored when Papa up and took his last illness. I nursed him faithfully but I can't say my heart was broken when he breathed his last as much as I would like to have had it. I just laid myself out on the funeral. We had three ministers and as none of them knew Papa very well, they said lovely things about him. There were lots of flowers and everybody who wasn't confined to their house came. No better funeral was ever given in our town, everybody said so.

Lawyer Hosmer came home from the grave and read Papa's will to me. He left everything to me and it turned out to be a good deal. Lawyer Hosmer thinks that when the farm is sold and everything put out at interest that I will get as much as three hundred dollars a

year. I tell you it is a shock to find yourself an heiress. He said that I must decide what I wanted to do. He is my lawyer now and will look out for my affairs.

October 15.

THE farm is sold and I didn't feel as bad as I had supposed I would. I am sick of the country and all the people here.

I was almost afraid to ask Lawyer Hosmer if he thought it would be a good plan for me to go to New York City. I needn't have been. He was just lovely and didn't begin to croak as everybody does about the dangers of a big city, as if I wasn't old enough to take care of myself. It ain't as if I was sixteen and it ain't as if I didn't know everything about cities and their pitfalls by heart.

People never act as if anybody in the

country ever goes wrong. Good Lord! there is Bertha Bullard. It nearly makes me cry every time I see her going by with her baby. Of course nobody more than says "Good morning, Bertha." When the baby gets old enough to play out alone it will have a tough time. I remember the boys used to call out an awful name at Sadie Brown's boy. People are awful cruel, but maybe if nobody was cruel to those kind of children there wouldn't be any shame in going wrong and then more would go. I guess it is a hard question to settle. Sin has been going on a long time. They do say Rome fell just because even the best people got so bad that they couldn't point the finger of shame at any one. I don't know if that's true or not. Anyhow, I do wish Bertha didn't look so pitiful. The way she loves that baby! It must be fierce to

love a child and know you have brought that shame on it. I never took much to children myself but most do when they have them. Will you just listen to me rambling on when I set out to tell all about my plans to go to New York City.

Here I could live nicely on my income but I am crazy to develop myself and become a woman of the world. I will learn some kind of work so I can get good pay and live well. They say in a big city it costs a fortune just to get enough to eat.

Before I go I am going to learn to be a telephone exchange operator; Lawyer Hosmer got me a chance to learn at Cohoes. I can go in and out each day. It will give me a chance to get used to city ways. Cohoes isn't nearly as big as New York but still it isn't country.

I felt very proud when Lawyer Hosmer said he wouldn't advise every girl to

go to New York; he knew I had a steady head and didn't seem fond of men like so many girls.

There must be something funny about me, I never can get stuck on any fellow. I like to go with them and all that, but as soon as they begin to talk silly and want to hold hands it just turns me against them. Now there is Will Fletcher; a nicer fellow never lived; he always has been at me to marry him. Before Papa died I tried awful hard to fall in love with him as I was getting so tired of living home. It was no good; I just couldn't. He kissed me once; it nearly made me sick. I knew then I never could.

The joke is he thinks I am a beauty! I have bright red hair, my eyes are a kind of mixed color, a good deal on the green shade! My skin is awful white and I

don't freckle like some. Poor fellow, there is no accounting for taste. *My* two ideas of beauty is a tall, majestic blonde with eyes as blue as the sky or a petite brunette with eyes like sloes (I always take that to mean dark brown). Will certainly went on when he heard that I was going to New York. He said that with my striking and unusual beauty it wasn't safe. When I got through laughing I told him that if he had read a little more he would know that city men would never take me for a beauty. He said he hadn't read much and didn't know about cities but he *did* know what *men* liked, city or country. I laughed so much that he got mad and went home. Judging from him, I guess that "love is blind" must be a true saying.

November 8.

WASN'T it lucky somebody came along

and bought the farm? We had an auction and sold the furniture. Lawyer Hosmer got everything fixed up, I got through my course at Cohoes and am now ready to go. I like the work real well. I met some pleasant girls and they were all envying me for my good luck in going to New York.

I had one more talk with Will and I guess I made him understand that there was no use hoping, as I told him if he was the last man on earth I wouldn't marry him. You can't say anything much plainer than that!

Lawyer Hosmer is going to escort me down to New York; he is so old I hate to have him take the trouble. He has friends whose house I am going to for a week until I get used to things. They have a job in view they think I can get and know of a nice place I can board. A

house where none but nice girls live.

I am all through saying good-by and am all packed. It seems kind of funny to be going. I guess I will come back for my vacations. A good many asked me to visit them, I thought it real kind.

I spent five dollars to-day buying flowers to put on the graves in our lot. We buried five children. I don't remember any of them, some died before I was born. I put most of them on Mama's grave. I always think if she had lived I would have loved her. I never really loved anyone.

NEW YORK CITY, *November* 18.

WELL, here I am in New York! It's different from anything I ever imagined, nobody could imagine any place so grand. When you get out of the train you walk and walk before you come to the street. I was remarking what a handsome depot

it was. They all burst out laughing and said it is only a makeshift. They are building a new one that will be like a palace. I am at the residence of Mr. and Mrs. Brown, they live in a flat. I must say it took me by surprise to see people well enough off to keep help living in such a little place. It's awful pretty though. Just packs of furniture and the walls full of pictures. Only the parlor has any view out the window, but my! that is grand, something passing every minute, I could sit and look out all day.

The room I have is so dark, it looks off on what they call a well, and I have to turn on the light even in the daytime. I don't mind, it is such fun working electric lights.

The Browns are real nice, I can never thank them enough for their kindness to me. Mrs. Brown doesn't seem a bit like

a city lady, has no more style than a hen. To-day she took me to see where I am going to board and to see about my job. I got the job, the man is a friend of Mr. Brown's which is how I got it. Where I am going to board seems great. It is on Second Ave. It used to be awful fashionable there once but now they say all the style is on Fifth Ave.

She took me out for a ride on a big automobile (I never let on I had never been on one before) that went all over the city, now I feel as if I know New York pretty well.

Lawyer Hosmer came to supper, I mean dinner, to-night to say good-by. I felt sorry to see him go, he has been kind and no mistake. He said he would send me my check every month; he gave me some real good advice. Said I could send for him at any time I needed a

friend. It did seem kind of lonesome after he went.

November 20.

HERE I am in my new home. It's just lovely. The lady who keeps it is too nice for anything. There are about twenty girls in the house and all look like perfect ladies. Mrs. Brown said she only took the very nicest class of girls.

We had a nice dinner (it seems that everybody in New York has dinner at night instead of supper) and I was introduced to all the girls, they aren't a bit stuck up. They all look so stylish. I can plainly see I will have to get some new clothes if I don't want to look country. Every last girl wore a rat, at home none of the girls ever got the hang of them, they always showed. Unless you knew every girl couldn't possibly have such thick hair you would never guess it.

My hair is so thick and long I don't see how I can manage a rat; I must though to be in it.

Most of the girls went out after dinner, some stayed in and played cards. They asked me to join; I tell you I was glad I knew how to play Bridge (Emmie's cousin from Troy taught us). I could see they were surprised that I knew how. Took me for more of a hayseed than I am.

November 30.

WELL, I've been seventeen days in New York and I like it more and more each day. How anybody can like the country when they could be here beats me. My work isn't hard and I do enjoy it.

I got a new hat right off, mine looked comic here. I got a few other things so now I look real nice and not a bit country. It's so funny, so many of the girls

at the house and at the office have said they thought my hair was beautiful. First I thought they were poking fun at me, but they do mean it. At home everybody but Will thought it a sight. I was always called "carrot top" at school.

So far the girl I like best is Minnie Wheeler, she is as nice a girl as you would meet in a day's walk, so refined and ladylike.

I wish more than ever I was a writer so I could tell about New York. I just don't know where to begin, it's something too grand for words. I thought when I rode around with Mrs. Brown on that auto that I had seen the whole place! Talk about your hayseeds, that was just a beginning.

One thing I can't get used to, I mean in all this crowd I don't see a soul I ever saw before. Nobody cares if you are

dead or alive. If a funeral goes by—and they do all the time—nobody knows whose it is. The girls nearly died laughing at me when I asked. There are lots of things I want so to know, I don't ask as I can't stand being laughed at. People always expect people from the country to be on to city ways, laugh at them if they don't. Yet when city people come to the country green isn't the word for them and yet nobody laughs. I wonder why?

One of the greatest things I have seen is the church Min (we call each other by our first names now) took me to on Sunday. It is right near here. It is an Episcopal church, handsome isn't the name for it. I can hardly believe it when Min tells me it is plain compared to some. First and last I am going to every church in New York. The clothes on the ladies

was something grand. We sat right up front, all the seats are free, rich and poor alike have to take their chances. First come first served. I put a dime in the plate—for an heiress I think that a nickel is too little—and you bet I was glad when Min told me that the man who passed the plate was one of the richest people in the world. My, but I would have felt cheap if I had put in a nickel! I thought that I saw a man put a ten dollar bill in the plate; I guess though it couldn't have been. If you once get the hang of that church I guess it is a lovely one to go to. I didn't seem ever to get one thing right, was always getting up when everybody was getting down. The ministers dress in white, and boys sing instead of ladies and gentlemen. It's just lovely. Min wants me to go to her club, the Girls' Friendly. It sounds fine, maybe I will.

December 15.

THE Browns are going to St. Louis to live, Mr. has a job there. I feel real sorry as I liked them and it was so pleasant to go and see them. They seemed so pleased that I guess it is a big thing. I would have felt worse if I hadn't got so thick with Min. I like her more all the time.

I go regular to church with Min and go to the club too. It must be lovely to be as good as Min; she's a real saint. A lot of nice girls go to the Friendly, but the girls are nothing to the young lady who kind of runs it. Her name is Miss Lucy, and she told me I couldn't have a better friend than Min. I tell you Min was pleased! Miss Lucy can play the piano like a streak and comes to meeting every week. Her father is as rich as anything and from what you hear she

helps everybody who needs help. Of course she couldn't really as there are too many people here. There are more than four million people and they tell me that lots would starve to death to-morrow if they didn't earn their daily bread to-day. It makes me kind of nervous to think of it.

Mr. Higginson, the young minister at the church, came to call on me. I tell you I was scared. I needn't have been, a livelier person I never met. He never mentioned religion once, and was interested to hear about all the people home. I told him lots of things. He thought Papa's funeral must have been lovely. As he went he said I must remember that any time I needed a friend to send for him. He told me how fine it was I had Min for a friend.

February 1.

GOODNESS me, how the time flies! I haven't a word in my journal since before Christmas. I certainly do like New York; the people are simply great. Min got me right in to her set. A nicer lot of fellows and girls no one ever saw. Some of the girls where I work are the limit, so vulgar and not a bit the kind you would want to go with. Min says where she works she is thought awful uppish. As Min says, if you have any doubts about a girl, steer clear of her. There are plenty of nice ones. She has no patience with girls complaining that they are led off by bad company. It looks too much to her as if they just go.

The first night I went to the theater it was a great revelation to me. A city all lit up is kind of awe inspiring. I wish I was an author so I could describe it.

Every person looks so gay and as if they were having such a good time. You feel so gay and light-hearted and as if nothing made any difference. But there is a different side to it, I found. I noticed so many such nice looking young ladies on the street who didn't seem to have any escorts. They looked kind of glum, some of them. I asked the fellow who I was with why there were so many such nice looking girls just kind of hanging around, he said he didn't know. When we got home, I asked Min and you can imagine how I felt when she explained to me. It spoiled my evening, I couldn't think of anything else. Of course I knew that such people existed, but it wasn't the same as seeing them. It's awful!

Min is going with a fellow named Harry Phillips. She says that he hasn't asked her to marry him in so many words,

but she knows that he is waiting for a raise. He is one of those saints like Min. Mr. Higginson at the church thinks the world of him. He has a friend, Phil Curtis, who has been awful kind to me. He has taken me to the theater three times, to the Hippodrome once. He kind of puts me in mind of Will, told me the other day his favorite hair for a girl is red, though he can't stand it for a man.

The only man I know outside of Min's set is Mr. Leonard, the gentleman who is the head of the office where I work. He looks for all the world like a hero on the stage, handsome isn't the word for him. He isn't a bit stuck up either, speaks as pleasant as can be. He seems real social and kind, stopped the other day and asked me if my work was too hard, if I had folks in town, and where I lived. Now there aren't many men of his wealth and

position who bother to even speak to a working girl. One of the girls told me his wife was an invalid; poor man, I can't imagine him tied to the couch of an invalid. I can just imagine how kind he is to her though. He lives in a grand house up-town and comes to the office in an automobile.

February 15.

I DO enjoy the social life in New York so much, there is something going on every minute. Harry Phillips, Phil Curtis, Min, and I go out a lot together to the theater and moving-picture shows. In the Spring we are going to Coney Island which they say is grand. I can hardly wait for a chance to see the sea; Min says it is grander than I can imagine from the pictures I have seen.

We all belong to a club named the Entre Nous. We meet every other Thurs-

day. It is composed of both ladies and gentlemen. At one meeting we do something to improve our minds and the next we just have a good time. It's awfully swell, a few of the fellows wore dress-suits but as they all didn't have them they made a rule that no one should. I'm awful sorry as I do admire dress-suits; my! but you see some swell ones on the gentlemen who sit downstairs in the theaters.

One of my favorite occupations is to ride on the Fifth Avenue 'bus as far as it goes; it's fun choosing which house you would rather live in. Of course the swells live on Fifth Avenue opposite the Park but give me Riverside Drive. It's as good as a circus to watch the policemen regulate the traffic, if it wasn't for them every last person would be run over I'm sure.

Miss Lucy lives up on Fifth Avenue near 80th Street in a regular palace they say. She told me that she and her father were both born down on Stuyvesant Square, right near here. Their old house is all torn down now. I always wondered why they came so far to church.

Her mother is dead and her father is strong on society; the girls at the Friendly all say they see his doings in the society column. Miss Lucy can twist her father around her little finger, I hear. The girls all say Mr. Higginson is dead in love with her; of course that is natural as she is so beautiful and lovely in every way, but he probably wouldn't dare propose, he a poor curate and she as rich as a princess. Poor man!

February 17.

Min and I had our first quarrel. I wouldn't be as evil-minded as she for

anything; I happened to mention how kind and friendly Mr. Leonard is and she went on like anything, gave me a long lecture on receiving attention from married men. She wouldn't wait until I explained how foolish it was to think of such a thing in connection with Mr. Leonard, why he told me in the kindest way, how careful I must always be about having anything to do with gentlemen I meet down town. I can't thank him enough as several tried to be friendly and after his advice I just sat on any further advances.

Why, he told me all about his married life. Not from anything that he said but more from his manner, I gathered that he isn't very happy. He spoke so sweet about his wife, called her poor afflicted little girl. I didn't like to ask what she was afflicted with, but would very much like

to know. Poor man! I do feel so sorry for him!

February 20.

MIN and I made up, I'll never feel like speaking of Mr. Leonard to her, she can't understand him and it's just as well to drop the subject. He met me on the way out to lunch to-day and walked right along with me; in fact, he said he wished we could go to some quiet little place and have lunch together. Of course I can't afford to go to any place he would go to but I felt ashamed to say that, so I said that I was going to meet Min; he was so interested to hear about Min, said he thought she must be a fine girl but not broad-minded like I am. I was never so pleased in my life. I would rather be broad-minded than anything, and to have a man of his kind say so was great. I

certainly will always try and be especially so when with him.

I nearly die laughing at Min, she is trying to make a match between me and Phil Curtis, nit! He's awful nice but he is never one to take my fancy, I don't want to get married anyhow.

March 1.

A GOOD while has gone since I wrote last time. We have done all our usual things. The most exciting thing is that Min and Harry are engaged, they can't get married yet but Harry hopes before long to get another raise so they can. Min is so happy, she loves him dearly, says she would rather live on a desert island with him than in a palace with anybody else. That's what I call true love. I certainly shall miss Min when she gets married. Maybe she would take me to board with them. I had a surprise a

week ago that I haven't got over yet. I got a note from Mr. Leonard (my, but he writes a swell hand) saying he wanted to see me about some important business matter and thought the best place to talk it over was a little restaurant he knew of. I had a good laugh; he added, "Don't mention this to your pal until I see you," of course he couldn't have known about the quarrel Min and I had but it was funny he happened to say it. Poor old Min, if she had known she would have thought goodness knows what; what he did was to get me a much better job.

Now ordinarily I would no more have gone to lunch with him than I would have flown, as I think it is very shady for a working girl to go to lunch with her boss. He is so different and I was so afraid he would think I thought things like Min. He took me to a restaurant too grand for

words and such looking people! every last one of them must have been a Four Hundreder, and such clothes as the ladies had on! As soon as I got a good look I told Mr. Leonard that I didn't feel I was dressed fit—I didn't even have on my Sunday suit—he only laughed and said not to mind, that there wasn't a lady there who wouldn't give everything she had for my hair and skin. I thought that was a kind of a funny thing to say but he has such a kind heart that he no doubt said it to put me at my ease; I'm getting just like Min! of course no one like a man of the world could like red hair.

That lunch! I'll never forget it if I live to be a hundred, it makes the oyster suppers that Harry and Phil took Min and me to seem like nothing, and yet I used to think them swell. They were too, compared to church suppers at home. I

never knew there was such things to eat as we had, my ice-cream was in a spun-candy nest, just think of it. Mr. Leonard had cheese and crackers, he doesn't like ice-cream, isn't that odd? While I was eating it he told me he had noticed I was a little pale and was afraid I was working too hard, so when he heard a friend of his say that he needed a girl to run the telephone, he spoke for me. Was any one ever so kind! He said not to tell anyone he got me the job as the other girls might think it was queer he didn't get them jobs. I get two dollars a week more pay too. We got talking about Min, it seemed like magic the way he sized her up, thinks her a regular saint but says those kind of girls are usually very narrow and are inclined to suspect harm. Now isn't it wonderful he should guess that about her?

Poor man, I do feel so sorry for him; he told me more about his married life to-day, his wife is away for her health a lot or confined to her room a lot and is so nervous she can't have him in the room much. I got the impression more from his looks that he is a heart-broken man. I don't believe she loves him as you would think she would, and him so kind and gentle too. I can tell he is by his manners, just the way he helped me on with my coat showed, of course, his manners are grand. I admire good manners above almost anything.

March 5.

Min is with Harry every evening now so I feel kind of lonesome. Being so dead thick with Min has kept me from making friends with other girls; of course Phil Curtis takes me out a good deal, and I like him quite well for a

friend but of late he acts kind of as if he wanted to be nearer than a friend. That always turns me against a man somehow.

I see a good deal of Miss Lucy just now as I have been doing some work for Mr. Higginson at the Parish House on Saturday afternoons and she is apt to be there too as she has a class that day. I am directing a lot of envelopes. Miss Lucy took me to a hospital with her the other day to see a poor woman she had sent there. It's just full of women with babies. She said it was one of the finest hospitals in the world. It is a grand building. Outside, there are all little statues of babies, I don't mean regular statues but the kind that look as if they were made and then mashed up against the building, there's a regular name for them but I can't remember it. The way

Miss Lucy loves babies is wonderful to see, she just hugs every one she sees, she doesn't kiss them as she says it isn't healthy. I do wish she could marry Mr. Higginson, they would make a lovely couple all right.

I was speaking of them to Mr. Leonard the other day and he said he didn't know her father personally, as he didn't move in his set; he said Miss Lucy's father is an awful snob and won't go with any but the Four Hundred. Mr. Leonard said he had the greatest respect for ministers but personally he didn't go to church as he could worship God better walking in the country or driving slowly in his automobile along some beautiful road. Just think how religious he must be! He said for that reason ministers and all narrow religious people have no use for him. He believes in living up to the

spirit of the law, not the letter as he says many do. It's lovely to hear him talk, he knows so much and is so high-minded. I guess I won't mention him to Miss Lucy as no doubt she would misjudge him, and I wouldn't like that, he is so kind to me. I see a good deal of him now as the gentleman I work for has gone to California and there is not much work to do. He comes in real often and always has a nice little talk with me while Miss Wiley, the bookkeeper, is in the main office looking up what he wants. I don't care much for her, though she is as nice as she can be to me, she always seems as if she was laughing at me, I'm sure I don't know why.

I wish I knew some way to repay Mr. Leonard for his kindness to me.

March 10.

If there is one thing above another I

hate it is eavesdropping. I was always brought up to think it was about one of the worst things a person could do, yet here I am knowing something I never could have known any other way, and yet I can't see how it was my fault, more my misfortune. My only consolation is I will never tell a soul even if I live to be a hundred.

This is how it happened. I was in Mr. Higginson's little inside office—you can't get out except by going through the regular office—directing some envelopes and Mr. Higginson was in the other office doing something, using the typewriter I think. Of course he knew I was there, several times he called me to ask some question that someone who came in asked. Pretty soon I heard a rap on the door and Miss Lucy came in, I didn't see her but of course I knew her voice.

They were talking about some work Miss Lucy is starting, I only heard a word now and then, then they must have walked over nearer the door because I could hear them quite plainly; you see as Mr. Higginson knew I was there I knew he wouldn't say anything he didn't want me to hear.

All of a sudden I heard him say—and his voice sounded kind of funny—

"You had better get Mr. Johnson to help you in that." (Mr. Johnson is one of the other young ministers.) "I won't be here then."

Miss Lucy said, "Why I thought you weren't going to take your vacation until September."

I got the notion just from the sound of their voices that they were standing very close together.

"I have practically decided to go to

Denver to live, there's an opening at St. John's for me."

Unless I had known that Miss Lucy was in the other room I would never known her voice when she said, "Why?" it sounded way off. He said,

"You know why Lucy, I simply can't stand seeing you every day; I've tried and I can't, so I am coward enough to run."

He said it as calm as could be and I thought it about as rude a thing as I ever heard a gentleman say to a lady. Then Miss Lucy spoke and her voice was more natural.

"You shan't go," she said and she gave a funny little laugh, "unless you take me with you too."

By that time I thought I must be dreaming. Then I heard him kind of cry out,

"Lucy."

Then came a silence that seemed an hour but was only a minute, I guess, and then Miss Lucy said—and she sounded that gentle way she does when she talks to babies,

"Oh, you foolish boy, why did you make *me* do it?"

Goodness knows, what they said sounded like Greek but I caught on they didn't know anyone was hearing them; so I decided to go and I hated to do it but if I had had any idea what I was going to see I would have stayed there all night sooner than go out. There right before my eyes was Miss Lucy with her arms around Mr. Higginson's neck and he had his arms around her waist, and he was looking over the top of her head. I must have gasped for he dropped Miss Lucy like a hot cake and said to me,

"Miss Wilson, I have just asked Miss Lucy to be my wife and she has consented."

It's an awful hard thing to say about a minister but that certainly was a lie; I was paying strict attention and he never said anything of the kind. I just stood still like a gawk, I know perfectly well what to say when told of an engagement too. Miss Lucy was as red as a beet and I must say didn't seem very much at her ease. She looked lovely though, her face had a shiny look like there was a light shining on it and her eyes looked like she could see something no one else could. I wish I could explain what I mean. She came over and took my hand so affectionately and said,

"Annie, dear, Mr. Higginson and I have been engaged such a short time that

I am going to ask you not to speak of it until I tell you to."

Then she turned to Mr. Higginson and said as calm as could be,

"I must be going now, I'm going to meet Father."

He said,

"I will go too, I want to see your father on some very important business—"

Off they went leaving me still standing like a fool. If that's the way the Four Hundreds get engaged I don't think much of it. No sign of romance!

April 1.

YESTERDAY Miss Lucy's father announced her engagement, that's the way they do it in her set. It was in all the papers and Min and I bought every one and cut the notices out to keep. The

best one of all was headed "SAINTLY CURATE ENGAGED TO WED MILLIONAIRE'S DAUGHTER," it went on to say all about Miss Lucy's childhood, how Mr. Higginson was the scion of an old Southern family and that he had been a foot-ball player before he took up his sacred calling. It told how Miss Lucy's family had in it the bluest blood in New York and how her father was a well-known club and sportsman. It's wonderful how papers know so much, it even told about her mother's death when she was born and what she said when she was passing away. It was enough to make you cry. Miss Lucy wrote me a note and told me I might tell the girls at the Friendly of her engagement as I had kept her secret so well. I can never forget how Miss Lucy and Mr. Higginson looked hugging. Up to

that date I had always thought a fellow and a girl hugging about the silliest sight there was, it always made me giggle. Somehow they looked lovely, perhaps it was because they are so lovely, it kind of made a lump come in my throat.

I do feel kind of mean. Min said the other day she was so glad I had my new job as she had taken a dislike to what she had heard of Mr. Leonard and was glad I was out of his office. I wish she was broad-minded enough to understand so I could tell her of his kindness to me. I know she wouldn't and I can't stand people misjudging my friends.

April 3.

I HAVE been out to lunch several times with Mr. Leonard and had a fine lunch and a very nice time; he is the most entertaining person I know; he makes all our set of fellows seem kind of flat. My

heart aches for him, he is so lonesome and he said it cheered him up to talk to me, I can't see why because I am not a bit amusing, everyone says I haven't any sense of humor. I guess it's because I take an interest in everything he says and I understand him. He says he has been misunderstood so much and where he had the best right to expect sympathy; I bet he meant his wife, she must be a hard-hearted woman. Anybody can see what an ideal husband he would make.

Yesterday when he left me, he laughed and said,

"Don't let your Puritan friend set you against me, you are one of the few real friends I have."

Then I told him I never mentioned him to Min as she wouldn't understand. He was very much interested and said I was quite right because some people were

made so that they always saw wrong in everything. I told him Min and Harry were only waiting for him to get a raise to be married. He took such a kind interest and said he wished there was something he could do. Now doesn't that show a kind nature?

April 20.

THERE's no truer saying than "What's one man's meat, is another man's poison," what's Min's good luck is pretty hard on me. The people Harry worked for suddenly told him if he could go right off, they had a big job he could take in Portland, Oregon. He is going to get $100 a month and his and Min's fare out. Harry said he had no idea how his boss knew he was going to marry Min but he did. Of course they will be married right off; my, but it will be lonesome! Mr. Leonard is away on business, I guess

he won't be back for some time, he will be interested when he hears about Min's good luck.

April 24.

It took quite a long time for me to decide what to give Min for a wedding present; money was no object but I wanted to give her something she could always remember me by. I finally decided on solid silver forks and spoons. The man tried to talk me into getting more and getting triple plate but I remember how stung I was when Aunt Ann left me plated silver! I got $20 worth and had her initials put on every piece, they didn't charge any extra for that which I thought pretty kind. Min burst right out crying when she saw them. Miss Lucy thinks the world of Min and was so glad to hear of her good luck. Min nearly fell dead when Miss Lucy took her out to Wana-

maker's and got her a lovely brown and white silk dress to be married in. She got lots of wedding presents and I don't wonder, she and Harry are both so popular.

April 30.

MIN was married to-day at noon, not because it is swell at that time but because they had to start on their long journey. The wedding was in church and Miss Lucy had a lot of flowers sent from their country place up the Hudson, it must be a grand place; once Miss Lucy had all the Friendly girls up for a garden party and they haven't got over talking about it yet. I was the bridesmaid. I just wore my spring suit which is gray and looked real dressy. Mr. Higginson married them, he does it just lovely. There was no reception but we all said

good-bye to them at the Parish House.

I came near crying when they went. Min has been a good friend to me and I know I am going to miss her more and more as time goes on. Miss Lucy told me she was going to Europe with her father in a few weeks, he has to go and take some baths at a very swell place. The girls say he is one of those hearty eaters that is common among the rich. They get sick, then go to Europe to drink water and take fancy baths in order to begin their eating the next winter. She said she was going to be married in the Fall when she gets home. I bet she hates to go. It's no treat as she has been lots of times and she will miss Mr. Higginson fierce, I bet. About all the doings at the Friendly close soon. I wonder why everything closes in the Summer? I suppose because Coney Island and such places

take the place of church clubs. I can't think of any other reason.

Phil asked me to go to the theater this evening and I went. I wish I hadn't now, he asked me to get married and went on and talked awful, accused me of encouraging him to think I cared about him and all that class of talk. Of course that is the end of him for a friend and I am sorry as I liked him awful well and enjoyed going out with him places, now I haven't got anyone to go with. Our trip home from the theater was anything but pleasant and I was feeling pretty low in my mind when I got home. When I got to my room the first thing I saw was a big bundle, and on opening it I found it was a great big box of high class candy, on top was a note from Mr. Leonard, saying he hoped to get home in a day or two and he knew how lonesome

I would be now that my friend was married—(I wonder how he ever found out that Min was going to be married, he's been out West ever since I knew it)—and wanted to cheer me up, he knew all girls liked candy. He signed the letter "Your best friend" and I am sure he is. Look at all he has done for me. How can I ever repay him?

I am ready for bed happier than I thought I could be with Min gone. The candy is the best I ever had, it will last me a year!

May 9.

About a week after Min's wedding I was sitting in the office feeling pretty blue, a thing I never did before; I was reading Min's letter for the third time, my! but she's happy! she says she never knew a man could be as good as Harry or so devoted as he is. They hadn't got

to Portland, and I can hardly wait to hear all about her home. Just when I was feeling the worst the door opened and who should walk in but Mr. Leonard looking so well. I tell you I was glad to see him, he took both my hands in his and shook them a long time—he has such cordial manners—and was too kind for words. He said he had been trying to get home but very important business had kept him. I thanked him for the candy and asked how he knew Min was married; he wouldn't tell me, said a fairy told him. He is a great one on jokes.

He said I would have to go out to dinner with him and I said no. I do think going out to dinner with a man is a different thing from going to lunch. He wouldn't take no for an answer so I finally consented. I will never judge anyone again offhand; if I had heard

of a girl going out to dine with a married man I would have been sure she was a fast girl, and yet somehow circumstances alter cases; why going out with Mr. Leonard was just like going out with a girl, well not exactly that. He has such polished manners, he treats everyone like a queen. We had a swell dinner all right, wound up with a big lump of ice-cream inside a musk melon. Mr. Leonard's wife and her mother have gone to Europe, he hopes it will benefit her health. He said she was a very good woman but narrow minded (the mother I mean).

I don't remember how it came up but we got talking about law and Mr. Leonard said that so many so-called religious people couldn't see how wicked the law of man is that binds a husband and wife when love has flown. In a most beautiful and impressive way he said, "The

only law God recognizes is the law of true love." I had never thought of that before, he has such high ideals. He isn't a bit influenced by the world's opinion.

I got home early, Mr. Leonard said he wouldn't have anyone talk about me any more than his own sister so he left me at the corner and waited until I got to the door, then he waved his hand. I almost thought he threw a kiss, but maybe I only imagined it. That party cured me of the blues all right.

Mr. Leonard had to go away again the next day but hopes to get home soon.

May 15.

I HAVE never been so lonesome in all my life. I don't know what is the matter with me. I can't seem to get settled. I got another letter from Min, it made me more lonesome to read how happy she

is. Not that I am not glad Min is happy but it just makes me notice more how lonesome I am now that she has gone and the Friendly meetings have stopped. I haven't even Phil Curtis to go with now, not that I want to, but he would be somebody.

Mr. Leonard is still away, he doesn't forget me though. He has sent me some books and two boxes of candy. He has written to me too, several times. I haven't answered any of his letters yet as somehow I didn't know just what to say. His letters sounded so different from the way he talks to me. It almost seems as if he was a single man. With a wife who can't understand him I suppose he ought not to be blamed if he seems to forget his married ties.

I realize it is an awful thing for me to say but I do wish he was single. Of

course I don't mean I wish his wife was dead, I only wish he had never been married at all. Where I know it is all right for me to go around with him I can see how others, not knowing his upright character, might think otherwise. Not that I really care, I hope I am above caring what the world thinks, it just makes me a little uncomfortable.

The more I think of it the more I think I had better answer his last note. If I don't I am afraid he will think I think he . . . I can't explain just what I mean, it's one of those things that is hard to say but awful easy to understand. I guess I will, I was reading it over and he seems to feel real hurt, though he says I mustn't write unless I feel like it. Of course I will make it very formal.

June 1.

WELL he got home and I was glad to see him. Mr. Leonard I mean. He was glad to see me too. Shook hands until I thought he would never let go.

He wouldn't take no for an answer, just made me go to Coney Island to dinner.

I hurried home to get dressed and then went back to the office, he thought it better to start from there. My I was proud sitting up on the front seat of his big auto, it was like my idea of Heaven. I laugh every time I think of the trips to Coney Island Min, Harry, Phil and I were planning. The way I went makes their kind of parties look cheap enough. Mr. Leonard spends money like water. He treats me like a queen, there isn't a girl who doesn't like that I tell you.

We got to the hotel late and every ta-

ble was taken so Mr. Leonard said we would have to eat in a private dining-room all by ourselves. It was a pretty little room and the dinner we had was beyond anything I ever imagined. We had champagne too, it tasted nicer than I thought it would, I only took a little as I was afraid it would go to my head. Mr. Leonard laughed at me and called me his little Puritan. He certainly is entertaining and nice, I have a real friend in him.

He thought a private dining-room nicer but I was awfully disappointed not to be where I could see the crowd.

After dinner while he was smoking he began to talk about some of the books he had sent me. I was so embarrassed as I am almost sure he hadn't read the last two he sent, they were very interesting, but made so light of marriage. He

talked so lovely about the books and made me see that marriage is only a law made by man and love is made by God, I had never thought of it that way. He is so broad-minded and has such high ideals, as I said. I felt cheap when I realized how evil-minded I would seem to him if he knew how those books struck me, of course I didn't tell him.

We went home early, he doesn't approve of young girls being out late, and he stopped the auto at the corner and took me to the door. He is so kind, said the girls in the house might not understand our friendship. Wasn't that thoughtful?

When we parted he took my hand and held it in both of his and said, "Little girl, I have been happier to-night than I ever expected to be again in this world," wasn't that pitiful? Just think of him

being so rich and grand and yet being unhappy. He is so brave about it too. It's all that hard-hearted old wife's fault I bet. She must be a fiend to neglect such a perfect husband as I am sure he is.

He said we were going to have lots more parties together. I am so glad as I enjoyed it so much and am so glad to do anything I can to give him pleasure, he has been so good to me ever since we met.

June 16.

I WISH I knew how to tell it to make it clear, I dread so being misjudged. For the last two weeks Mr. Leonard has taken me out to dinner, for rides, to the theaters and sent me books and candy and just been like I never knew anyone in the world could be. Once or twice almost unconsciously he has started to put his arms around me but stopped the min-

ute I reminded him he was a married man. Lots of times he has said in so many words that his wife was his wife in name only, but still I knew it wasn't right.

To-night we were at Coney Island and had to have a room all to ourselves. After dinner he just broke down. He was helping me put on my coat, all of a sudden he clasped me in his arms and kept on kissing me until I thought I would smother. Then he told me how he loved me and had loved me ever since the first day he saw me (just think of that), but didn't want to speak until he felt he had won my love. I have read in books about intense love but I never knew what it was like before. He said no man ever loved a girl as he loves me. Maybe it's true, it's all so new to me that the way he hugged me made me kind of ashamed. I can't really explain what I mean, but

I was glad to hide my face on his shoulder.

He just made me tell him I loved him. I know I do though he says I don't know what it means but he will show me. All of a sudden I remembered he was married. He wouldn't let go of me but set to work to explain how his marriage is just a mockery, he is tied by an unjust law and he showed me how if I didn't let him be my friend always, and let him love me, even if I could not return it, he didn't know what would become of him.

He was so pitiful and I do love him I am sure. How could I help it? He is the only friend I have now. I can never repay him for his kindness.

I was never so happy before in my life and yet I can't get to sleep so am writing. When I think of Will Fletcher and Phil Curtis as compared to Mr.

Leonard (he said I must call him Ralph —it's such a lovely name—) I just want to laugh. Even though I have outgrown my narrow, foolish ideas I can't help wishing Ralph—I can hardly get used to even thinking of him as that—hadn't a wife so we could be married. It spoils half my pleasure not to be able to write and tell Min and Miss Lucy of his loving me. They would neither of them understand, not that I really care a snap, but I am just so proud to think I could inspire such a great and good man to love me.

He calls me Annette, isn't that a sweet name for Annie? Of course I wouldn't laugh at him for anything but I almost did when he told me I didn't realize how my beauty thrilled him. My beauty! As I said before, love is blind. I'm glad of it though, as it's lovely to have some-

one who has seen so many girls, think you are pretty even if you don't think so yourself.

I will never be lonesome again. I just can't get to sleep thinking of it all and how different it is from what I always imagined having a man you loved tell you so. So different from Min and Miss Lucy. Poor Miss Lucy! I often think of her unromantic engagement. Tomorrow he is coming to take me out to lunch, says he can't wait till evening to see me.

I am the proudest girl in New York and with good reason.

June 18.

My life is just one good time. There never was such a lover as my Ralph. He is so handsome and so swell. He says he doesn't belong to the Four Hundred and he wouldn't care to, it seems they

are all very narrow. He believes in a larger, freer life; I do too. The only thing that keeps my happiness from being perfect is that I can't tell Min. Perhaps some day that woman will— No, I mustn't say that, it's too wicked even to think such a thing.

Ralph didn't like the place I was living, he says there are a lot of gossips (I must say they do talk quite some) and he is so afraid someone will misjudge our beautiful friendship. He found me a room, nicer than mine and not any higher price, at another place. I didn't care to change but some of the girls have been kind of uppish lately, I guess they may have seen me out with Ralph. He thinks they are jealous.

Since I came here to this place every day when I get home my dear friend has a [illegible] of flowers for me and some days a

box of candy too. Usually there is a little note. It is such a pleasant welcome. I know there never was such a lucky girl. I feel like I was older than when Min left.

June 20.

Oh, I wish I had someone who could understand, to talk with! Such an awful thing has come up for me to decide and I just can't, I'm nearly sick trying to make up my mind. Oh, I can't, I can't!

This is how it happened. Last night Ralph and I were through dinner and he had his arm around me when all of a sudden he drew me to him and said he couldn't live without me any longer. It makes me blush when I think of what I thought he meant. How could I have misjudged him even for a minute, him so high-minded and noble too. I cried and

acted like a fool; he must have known what an evil thing I thought. He let go of me and looked so sad and said, "Does my little Annette not trust me?" Then he went on and said what he meant was that as cruel Fate had made it impossible for us to be man and wife before the law, he asked me to be his wife in the sight of God. It was an awful shock to me at first, he said he knew it would be, but as he talked on it got clearer. It seemed as if I couldn't say "no," he loves me so, I love him too, and he is so lonesome. He only wants me to be broad and big enough to throw aside conventions. Of course as he says his love for me will last through life. He says his respect and love for me will be greater than if a minister had said a few words over us.

I just couldn't say "yes" though I felt awful. He always thinks of me and

when he saw how I felt said, "Come, Darling, we will go home and you can think it out by yourself. I don't want you to do anything you don't feel you ought; don't let *my* happiness influence you, I only want to think of you. How noble he is! I don't feel as if I was ever going to be able to decide. When I got home from the office this afternoon I found a note from him saying that he wouldn't bother me until I had made up my mind and that I must never forget he was waiting for me. All I will have to do is to say "Come." He made it plain last night that he would never see me again except I am ready to marry him in God's sight.

I must go to bed and try to go to sleep. I have such a headache.

June 23.

It seemed like someone was dead when

I get home and don't find any note or flowers to welcome me. I can't seem to sleep, I just think and think and can't decide. I got another letter from Min today asking why I hadn't answered her last. How can I write when I have nothing to tell her?

June 29.

TO-DAY when I got home I found a note from Ralph saying he hadn't meant to write but he was so heartbroken that if I still couldn't trust him he was going away on Saturday, that is if I still was sure I didn't ever want to see him again. Oh, I have been so lonesome! No one will ever know.

I couldn't stand knowing he is so sad. I sat down and wrote to him. Until I got the note off I didn't know how lonesome I was, he is the only friend I have and I am all he cares for in the world, he

said so. Why should I not do all that I can to make him happy? As he says, what is a minister saying a few words?

I feel so relieved to get my mind made up, I will get a good sleep to-night, I haven't slept well for so long.

June 30.

WHAT an afternoon we have had! I just cried when Ralph came in I was so glad to see him. He was shocked at the way I looked, said while he lived I shall never be so lonesome again. That was a comfort to think of. He says I have kept him waiting as long as he can stand so I promised him to marry him (we are always going to call it that) day after to-morrow.

He bought me a lovely ring and it had inside Annette from Ralph. He got me a regular wedding ring which I am going to have when we start on our trip. He

said as his wife I would have to dress handsome so he took me to a swell store and I got lots of things. He spoke of me to the lady who waited on us as his wife. I got as red as fire. When we go away he is going to call me Mrs. Leonard. It's really like a regular marriage. He says it will be much more sacred, I guess he knows after his experience. It doesn't seem possible that such a little while ago I thought Min's wedding fine and her clothes swell. I have promised Ralph not to ever write to Min nor Miss Lucy again, he said he is jealous of anyone I like. He thinks they are both fine girls but thinks they are both so narrow, of course they are. With my husband (don't that look funny?) with me all the time what will I want with my friends anyhow? I certainly have outgrown the crowd I used to go with, Ralph has

spoiled me for them. Oh, how happy I am going to be! I will just give my life to making him happy. I must stop now as we are going out to dinner and I must get dressed.

July 2.

To-DAY is my wedding day and I am all dressed ready for my husband to call for me. We are going first to Atlantic City and then to Niagara Falls. He laughed at me for wanting to go there but everyone back home did when they went on any trip at all.

It's funny to go and leave everything. No girl ever had so much happiness in store for her as I have. It's time to go downstairs now as I mustn't keep him waiting. Next time I write I will be a Mrs!

Good-by Annie Wilson!

II.

RIVERSIDE DRIVE, *September 5.*

I JUST know that no girl ever had such a wedding trip as I had! Atlantic City, Saratoga, Niagara Falls and Canada. I never really knew what swell living meant before. I got used to it pretty soon and now I can't realize that once I thought our Entre Nous Club swell. It makes me laugh even to think of it compared with the way I live now. I will always like dear old Min though, even if I never see her again, which I probably won't, our lives are so different, hers so narrow and mine so broad.

We came back from our trip to this apartment hotel on Riverside Drive. Swell isn't the name for it. My sitting-room looks right out on the river. I can

hardly realize I am here. I used to look at this very house as I passed on the 'bus and wonder who lived here, I mean what kind of people. Little did I ever think I would be here, and as Ralph's wife too. He is the best and and kindest man that ever lived, I know. He just seems to do nothing but think of lovely things for me. I wish I was more demonstrative by nature, he keeps saying I don't love him enough. I am sure I do for if I didn't I couldn't be as happy as I am.

Very soon after we went away he told me he had used some pull to get Min's husband his job out West. Partly because he knew I would be glad and partly because he was awfully jealous of Min, just think of that! My, wasn't I proud when he was telling me how he was in love with me all the time, was jealous of everyone I knew. All he cared about in the

world was to make me love him and have me all to himself. What girl wouldn't be proud of such a romance?

October 10.

I HAVEN'T seemed to feel like writing in my journal of late. We have been out a good deal in society, lots of theaters with suppers afterwards and automobile trips with lots of his friends. So far I haven't met one of Ralph's lady friends whom I like much, they don't seem to be as refined as the gentlemen, strange as it may seem. I don't think I get on very well with his friends, try as I do to please. A few nights ago I felt so bad because they were laughing at me and I knew Ralph was ashamed of me. I cried like a baby; he comforted me and said I was too much of a Puritan to enjoy them, then he said, "You are the most beautiful

girl in the world and I can't expect everything." Wasn't that lovely? He often says I am as cold as a stone. He seems real sad over it. I'm not I know, but I know I am not like him. It's awful to say but I wish he wasn't so intense.

Of course Ralph goes to business again so I am alone all day. I wish I had some friend to go with in the daytime, I haven't even got my room to dust here. I go out a good deal and goodness knows Ralph gives me lots of money to spend, I guess I take after Papa, I'm no spender. I have everything I want anyhow. I read the magazines a good deal. I wish I liked sewing so I could get some fancy work. Couldn't Min and I have fun if only she was here. I suppose she wouldn't associate with me! What do I care? I know I did right anyhow and I can't bother my head about what narrow

people think. I am perfectly happy. I wonder if Miss Lucy is home yet?

November 20.

It's almost Thanksgiving and Ralph has to be away on business a good deal. He says it is impossible to take me along. It makes me wish more than ever I had a girl friend. Several people in this house have been real friendly but Ralph doesn't let me make friends with people he doesn't know. He says it might make it awkward for us. I keep forgetting we aren't like other married people, I wish we were. His legal wife is home from Europe, her health is much better and she has gone out West. Of course he didn't tell me, I overheard someone say so.

I used to hate housework but now I would like to do all the work in our little

apartment, it would be something to do anyhow. The chambermaid is real pleasant, she tells me a lot about the other people who live here. She told one awful story about a couple who were turned out. It seems that they weren't respectable. . . . If Ralph was home all the time of course I wouldn't be lonesome. I don't feel very well anyhow, kind of tired a good deal. I seem to have read so many sad stories of late I seem to cry so easy. I never used to. I am glad Ralph is away so he doesn't see me, he might think I am not perfectly happy. I am though.

I bet Min has a cute little house, she wrote me a lovely letter saying how worried she was she hadn't heard from me. She told me she was going to have a baby. She seemed awful happy about it, everyone to her taste I say. I can't imagine

wanting to be tied down to a baby, I never took to them. I did so want to write but Ralph was so hurt to think I wanted to and said if he didn't feel I loved him enough to give up my friends it would almost break his heart. Of course I wouldn't if he thinks that. Anyhow I don't know what I would say.

I watch the papers and don't see any sign of Miss Lucy's wedding. I do hope to goodness they haven't fallen out. No, I know they couldn't, I can't explain but anyone who saw would know they couldn't. I guess that is how every couple ought to be. I would give a good deal to see Mr. Higginson and hear him in his cheery way say, "Well, Miss Wilson, how goes the world with you?" What a funny thing for me to remember, it's a good long time since anyone has called me Miss Wilson.

I wonder if they ever think of me and wonder where I am? They were both so kind to me, I certainly was fond of them both. Anyone to see all that I have written might think I am not perfectly happy. I am of course. Who would not be in my place? I am a loved and honored wife and I know I did just right.

December 2.

Oh, my God, my God, it can't be, it can't. Ralph said it never would be and I trusted him. What am I going to do? Ralph is away in Philadelphia but will be home pretty soon. He must come. I will go crazy if I have to think about this. It can't be true, the doctor must be mistaken. I can't, I can't; why, I'm not married!

December 8.

Ralph's coming home was so different

from what I thought. He seemed almost rough to me. Said I was acting like a fool. He said as long as what he suggested for me to do seemed a sin to me I would have to get on as best I could. After a while he began to feel sorry for me and called me his poor little girl. He made me go out to the theater and I almost forgot it, the play was so funny. Maybe that woman will die— No, I mustn't even think that, it is wicked. As long as I have Ralph nothing matters. He made me realize he hadn't meant to be cross, he was tired and the thing was a shock to him. I felt ashamed when he said I ought to trust him to take care of me. Oh, I do, I do. When he is home I can stand it but he is away so much now. Sometimes it just seems as if I couldn't stand the disgrace and then again it seems as if it must be a nightmare and

that I will wake up and find it isn't true. I wish I was dead.

December 12.

THERE is no use my trying to hide it from myself any longer; Ralph doesn't love me as he did at first. I have felt it but wouldn't let myself believe it. I don't know why. I try every way to please him, he seems to be tired of me. Of course I never was his equal but he used to be so happy with me. This curse which has come on me is what has made it. I need his love so much now too. He keeps telling me that I know how quickly he would marry me if he could. Of course I know that, if I didn't I would die. I do wish there was some way I could please him again as I used to. I wish I was dead! Think of me coming to this. I keep thinking of Bertha Bullard, I wish now I had tried to be friendly

with her. Poor girl! her case was so much worse than mine. She had no one to stand by her as I have. I keep thinking of all Ralph has done for me.

December 15.

RALPH is still in Philadelphia, he was more like his old self before he went, maybe I just imagined that he didn't seem to care so much. My head aches a good deal and I may be getting notions. He feels awful at having to leave me so much just now. Sometimes I think I will go crazy if I can't stop thinking of this curse that has come on me. I can't bear children anyhow. Oh, God, take pity on me, make it not come true.

I saw by to-day's paper that Miss Lucy was going to be married the middle of January. It seems that Mr. Higginson has been at death's door with ty-

phoid fever, he is about well now, they are going to Europe for him to get back his strength. How worried she must have been. I know what lovely care she took of him. I don't know why, it makes me cry to think of them.

Ralph is coming home to-morrow, I will try not to seem worried, I can see it annoys him. He seems kind of worried lately, I hope he isn't having any trouble with his business. Maybe that is why he is away so much. I mustn't be selfish. I will try harder than ever to please him. If I live to be a hundred I can never repay him for his kindness to me. Instead of thinking of myself I will think of all he did for me, it is enough to keep me busy, I a poor country girl when he first knew me!

I guess I will go to bed, it will make to-morrow come quicker.

December 20.

My dear husband seems more like h— old self, when he got home he talked s— lovely about me and told me over an— over again how much he loved me an— how he wished he could marry me. Because I cared he said. He knows it makes no difference. For a few days I almost forgot this awful thing. He had to go right away again and couldn't say when he would be back. He was very loving when he was going and said to never forget how happy we had been. Of course I never will. I wish he didn't have to go, he don't realize how sick and lonesome I am or I'm sure he would do something. The days seem like a year.

December 25.

I EXPECTED Ralph last night, he has hardly written but I thought he wouldn't

leave me alone Christmas. He hasn't come yet but I won't give up hope. Last year Min and a lot of us went to church Christmas Eve, it was grand. I haven't been to church for so long. Somehow I long to go now but I don't know if I ought to, Ralph would laugh at it if I suggested it. Of course as Ralph says we left church and that kind of thing behind us. Well, I guess it was just as well.

I couldn't eat any dinner. I did think he would come. I am kind of worried, maybe he has met with an accident.

. . . . . .

It is almost daylight and I haven't been to sleep yet. Oh, God, let me die. There must be a mistake somewhere, it just can't be true. I guess I am going crazy, I can't remember things—my head hurts so—

Instead of Ralph coming he sent me a letter. It said he had seen for a long time that I didn't love him (indeed I did, only not in his way) and thought I would be happier without him. There was a lot more but I can't remember it. Nothing makes any difference. He isn't coming back anyhow! He said he knew I was too much of a lady to make a fuss. Of course I am. I wonder what I can do? If I could only get to sleep. I can't think my head feels so queer. . . .

January 2.

A WEEK has gone and I feel ten years older than I did Christmas morning. A little while ago (I can't remember exactly) a man came to see me who said he was Ralph's—I must say Mr. Leonard now I suppose—lawyer, he was real pleasant. He says I can stay here un-

til August, he says there is a lot of money in the bank for me to use. He said it was a pleasure to deal with a lady who took things so quiet. I wonder what he thought I would do. I have some pride left even if I am nothing but a ruined girl. That's what I am, and I haven't a friend in the world to turn to!

January 8.

Six months ago I was a happy girl. Oh, why didn't I listen to Min? I might have known no swell man like him could go on loving a girl like me. But he swore it was forever and forever. What shall I do? I can't stay here, it's too lonesome!

It isn't that I care so much for myself —it's this awful thing that's coming to me that makes it so bad—somehow as I have thought so much of late it has come

to me that it wasn't all I had thought it would be. I mean being married. Perhaps I oughtn't to judge, the real kind may be different. I suppose at the last Ral—Mr. Leonard just tried to be loving because he felt sorry for me. Of course I know he got tired of me. I am not a fool. If he did of course, it may have been right for him to stop coming here. I want to think the best of him. I will never be ungrateful for all he did for me. I know he would have legally married me if he could, a thousand times more when he knew my trouble. Well he shall never know how I feel. I have my pride.

I suppose it's wicked for a mother to hate her child. I wish I didn't, perhaps if I was legally married I wouldn't. Oh, it can't be true, it can't. How can he leave me to go through all that alone.

I gave up all my friends for him too, now I haven't a soul to turn to. It almost seems as if I wasn't his wife even in the sight of God or He wouldn't let him leave me so. I must go to bed, I am too tired to write any more.

III

Later.

THIS is the first day I have felt well enough to write. I have been so sick. It seems funny to be sitting up in bed with a trained nurse in the room and Miss Lucy coming back in a little while. Dear, dear Miss Lucy! I don't know where to begin. I told the nurse it would make me feel better to write. I guess she was right, I do feel dizzy.

. . . . .

Later.

I GUESS I had better begin at the beginning and tell how it happened.

A few days after I got his letter I was going out to take a ride on the 'bus thinking it might stop my headache. I picked up the newspaper to glance at it before I went out. I turned it over and there I saw an article; as I read it I can truthfully say I went crazy. Everything turned red as I looked, but I saw enough God knows. It told of Mr. Leonard's marriage to his partner's daughter in Philadelphia (so that was his business). That wasn't the worst. It said his first wife got a divorce from him two months ago at Reno. I never knew such cruel people lived. Just think he could have married me when he first knew! I mustn't think of it, it makes me feel faint.

When I look back I know I didn't know what I was doing—may God forgive me—I just ran downstairs and out the door, I was going to jump in the

river. I had to wait a minute to cross the Drive. An auto was passing slowly, I heard a voice call out "Annie," I looked up and there was Miss Lucy and Mr. Higginson. They looked like angels. I must have fainted as I didn't know a thing until I woke up in my bed. Miss Lucy was right beside me. I tried to explain but she said she understood. I went to sleep again and slept a lot. I hadn't slept much for so long, so I was tired.

Those two weeks had been like a nightmare, it's so awful not to have a friend to turn to. Hearing Miss Lucy's voice was like a little peep into heaven.

January 12.

To-day Miss Lucy let me tell her all about it. She had read the paper I had in my hand when I ran out, the janitor

knew something—I don't know how I am sure—she kept hold of my hand and two or three times said, "Poor child, poor child," some tears dropped on my hand. When I got through talking she said there was no use in us talking about what I had done—(I am afraid I did not make her feel that it seemed just like a real marriage to me)—but said what we must do first was to get away from here. She said I must not think of anything. She and her father and Mr. Higginson would settle everything, all I must do was to get strong enough for the doctor to let me get up. She said I must leave everything I had here, nothing he paid for is going with me. I hadn't thought of that. She didn't say where I was going, I don't care, so it's away somewhere. She seems so kind and good but I can feel she is different, I can't explain it.

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January 13.

Miss Lucy brought me some of her old things to wear, first I didn't quite understand how she felt about taking away anything he had paid for, I do now. She said—when I asked her—if Mr. Leonard wasn't away on his trip, Mr. Higginson would be only too glad to see him and give him back everything. (I can hardly bear to think of his being on his wedding trip, and it hasn't been six months since we went on ours! Poor girl, little does she know what is in store for her.) Then she said, and she smiled a funny way she does sometimes, "Daddy is going to attend to it." I told her I didn't like to put her father to so much trouble, she smiled again, "It will be a real pleasure to him." Somehow from what I heard I never thought of him as so kind.

Miss Lucy said Mr. Higginson thought it would be all right for me to keep my wedding ring and to call myself Mrs. Wilson, he thought it would be best. I am so thankful, it didn't seem as if I could go away and have people think of me as they would if I had no ring and was Miss.

This afternoon Miss Lucy is going to take me up to her grand house at Rhinebeck, I am going to live with the gardener's wife, she used to be Miss Lucy's nurse. I have promised her not to worry about the future, she will be home from Europe before the awful thing comes and will decide what is best. God forgive me for ever thinking she wasn't the most perfect person alive. Think of that villain trying to turn me against them!

I wish I had the courage to ask her for news of Min, dear Min.

RHINEBECK, *January* 14.

IT was dark when I got here, Miss Lucy went right back. Mrs. Flanagan is just lovely. I had my supper and went to bed. I woke up early, it's still dark but I will write until she calls me to breakfast.

First I felt so kind of sick and dazed that I didn't have much time to think, I guess I will have plenty of time here. Miss Lucy set me thinking. On the way up she told me the doctor said it would happen in June, then she asked me if I had any idea yet what I wanted to do then. I said I supposed the best thing would be to get someone to adopt it and then go away and find work. I will never forget her face when she said, "Annie, don't disappoint me *again*," she looked so sad, then smiled that lovely smile she has and took my hand and said, "Annie, listen to

me, I wish I could make you see that even if Mr. Leonard had married you when he could, it wouldn't have made your sin any the less." I started to explain that I hadn't felt that way, but she wouldn't let me speak. "Way down in your heart somewhere you *always* knew you weren't doing right." I started to explain again, "Listen to me first. The only thing in all this horrible affair that is pure and sacred is the little soul God has given in your care to bring safe into the world, see that you make yourself a fit mother to receive it." Her eyes were wet and she looked so kind. She always was crazy about babies, I suppose that's why she feels that way about it. I must say I can't see how she makes it out, it seems to me just the other way around.

January 20.

WELL, I begin to feel quite at home. Mrs. Flanagan is lovely and Mr. Flanagan full of jokes from morning to night, he is the head gardener and has lots of men under him and big greenhouses full of flowers and fruit and even vegetables. Day before yesterday Miss Lucy was married, Mrs. Flanagan went to the wedding, she took care of her from the day she was born and loves her I can tell you. It was a quiet wedding, just their relations. They sent a piece of wedding cake to everyone on the place; that night they had a big party up here for the people on the place to celebrate the wedding. Of course I didn't go, they said it was lovely. To-day I went all through the greenhouses and it was a treat I can tell you; I wonder what Min would think if she could see me walking around here where her

flowers came from. I think so much of her, I couldn't write though, how could I explain?

I forgot to record that one day Mr. Higginson came up on an errand and came to see me. He didn't talk like I was afraid he would, scold me and preach I mean. He started right off by saying he had confidence enough in me to feel sure I was going through this with courage and come out of it a good woman ready to face whatever life had in store for me. He hoped my sorrows were over. He made me see that a good deal of the way I felt depended on me. I mustn't think of Mr. Leonard with hatred, it only hurts me. He had gone out of my life and it rested with me to let him go entirely, by not ever thinking of him. He said too that I mustn't forget *all* the blame didn't go to him, I had undertaken to

take the law into my own hands and must take the consequences. He shook hands so cordial and said he wanted me to make them both proud of me, it was the one way I could repay Miss Lucy.

I just burst out crying, if he had scolded or preached at me I could have answered back. Oh, I will do what they say and try and put that man out of my mind.

It may seem a little thing but it hurt me to have Miss Lucy not kiss me good-by, she did Min when she went. I guess she thinks I am not fit to kiss. From her point of view I suppose I ain't. If I could only get to work and didn't have this awful thing to think of, coming to ruin my future, I might be almost happy.

February 1.

To-day I got a big box that Miss Lucy's maid sent me with a note saying

she had left it for her to send. I opened it expecting to find some of her clothes. Instead it was full of lovely goods, lace, baby ribbon, flannel and patterns. Two great big silk bags that smelled sweet just like violets were in it. On top was her calling card, on it she had written "For Annie's Baby from Miss Lucy." I cry so easy now that I cried when I saw the card. I showed it to Mrs. Flanagan and she raved over it all. She is crazy about babies too. I didn't like her to know how I feel about babies so I didn't say anything. There was a lot of worsted too, she is going to show me how to knit and how to make the things. She said Miss Lucy had told her to. I will do my best to please them, I am so grateful to them all.

It turns me sick to think how I felt when I started that day to go to the river.

Six months ago I was a happy young girl, now I feel like an old woman. It isn't years that ages people, it's what you go through.

Miss Lucy sent me a postal card from her steamer, there was a picture of it on it. She gave me her address and said she hoped I would write to her every week and tell her how I was getting on. Indeed I will.

February 16.

I FEEL sure Mrs. Flanagan must know my history as she never asks any questions about my past.

I wish I could be happy again. Maybe I hate that man too much to have room in my heart for anything else. It is all very well for Mr. Higginson to tell me to put him out of my mind. I did no wrong! I know they can't see it as I do, but then I can't see it as they do. If

this baby wasn't coming how easy everything would be. I could go to another city, no one would know, and get work. . . . I mustn't go on this way, my good friends wouldn't like it I know. I must try and please them.

The snow is deep on the ground, we have a good many sleigh rides. They have to use the horses or they get sick, it's fine for us.

Miss Lucy's father was up the other day. He told Mrs. Flanagan that he couldn't stand being alone any longer so to-morrow he sails off to join the bride and groom. The way he loves Miss Lucy is kind of pitiful. It does seem with all his millions he could find something to amuse him without tagging after them.

February 18.

I GOT a letter from Miss Lucy to-day,

she is so thoughtful. I have written quite often, I love to write and I know she is glad to hear how I get along. It helps to keep me from being so lonesome. Oh, I am so lonesome! Not for my life that has just gone. Not that. I don't know what I am lonesome for, perhaps for dear old Min. It seems hard to believe that nothing can ever be as it was before. . . . no, I won't get on that again.

I am getting on quite nice with my things. My! ain't they small. It was a job learning to knit. I mean nice and even. Mrs. Flanagan is so fussy, she kept me ripping out about all the time. The afghan I am doing is white with a pink border. The sack is the same, I haven't begun that yet. I have finished a little nightgown; every time I see it I laugh, it is about the size for a doll. Mrs. Flanagan says "it" won't be much larger

than one. Somehow I am still kind of ashamed to let on to her that I hate to think of its coming, I feel sure it would kind of shock her.

I feel pretty well, if only I slept well it would be fine. I do go to sleep and then wake up with a start. Then I think and think. Everything comes back to me. Here I am a ruined woman (all through that vile man) with nothing to look forward to but to drag through life tied to a child. Of course I will always be good to it. But it will prevent my ever forgetting the past. How could I ever forget with it to remind me every day?

Sometimes I wish they hadn't come riding along and I had really jumped in the river. . . . That's wicked to say, I'm going out for a walk and think of something else. Oh, God, let me forget!

March 4.

It kind of smells like spring to-day. Somehow the days go awful fast, I don't know why either, I don't do much. The Flanagans are so pleasant and entertaining. Mr. just keeps you laughing all the time. Miss Lucy writes me lovely letters. It must be fine to have such beautiful thoughts as she has. I read a good deal, there is a good library in the town where I get books. I talk a lot to Mrs. Flanagan and sew. My sewing is coming on fine, I am real fond of doing it. I got some sachet powder and some ribbon and made some bags, they smell sweet. The little things look so nice that I want them to smell nice too.

The other day Mrs. Flanagan asked me if I wanted a boy or a girl. I burst right out laughing. I had never thought of it as anything but a baby. I said I

didn't care but since then I have thought of it a lot. First I thought a boy would be less bother and then I thought it might take after . . . I mean he might turn out a villain too. The more I think of it the more I favor a girl. You can dress them so cute and they are real company too. I hope Miss Lucy will think my things are pretty, she seems to expect so much of me. I can try to come up to her expectation anyhow. I don't think as much about *him* as I did, I just keep saying, "He ain't worth it, he ain't worth it."

March 28.

It's almost April and so warm, the bluebirds have come. I feel so much better. I am crazy for real warm weather to come so I can sit out doors under the trees. I can't just make it out but ever since I wanted my baby to be a girl I feel so dif-

ferent about it all. I don't hate her a bit, indeed I don't. I can almost see how she will look. I do hope she will have golden hair and brown eyes. I know one thing she isn't going to be named after me. I am going to try and think of the most beautiful name in the world for her. Poor little girl, she won't have any last one. Oh, that cruel man, that cruel man! How can such wicked people be allowed to live? I keep thinking what I will ever tell her when she asks me where her Papa is. Mr. Higginson said I must tell the truth about it to anyone whose business it is to know. Of course it is *her* business. I will hate to have her know that such creatures exist, yet I will have to tell her that the villain lured me into a mock marriage (I suppose it will be alright to call it that) with him. The more I think of it the more true I can see that all the things Mr. Higginson said

to me about my duty to the baby are. Just think what I was planning to do with the baby! Oh, how wrong that was.

April 4.

I HAVE made some of the little clothes just too fancy and cute for anything. They all smell lovely too. I keep them in my second bureau drawer, lots of times I just stick my nose in. It kind of brings her clearer to my mind, I can almost see how she will look in them. I am wondering how old she will be before she can say "Mama." It's certainly company thinking of her.

I have quite a list of names I may name her. Gladys, Mae, Marietta, Violet and Muriel are all lovely and so swell sounding. The trouble is I can't decide which one is the best and she must have the best. Of course I would rather name her for

Miss Lucy, that would be out of the question, I wouldn't dare suggest it.

There are lots of robins and blue birds in the trees, all busy getting ready to build their nests. There are more little chickens on this place than I ever knew could be on one farm. There are dozens of little lambs, they are darlings. I never took notice of young animals before. Mr. Flanagan says they are all part of the Spring.

I keep thinking what a good time a little girl could have here in the Spring. I wonder where my little girl and I will be this time next Spring? Far from here I guess, starting new somewhere. She will be such company wherever we are. I mustn't think of plans until I am well again, I promised not to.

April 15.

I LIVED in the country all my life and

I can frankly say I never noticed the Spring come before. Mr. Flanagan calls us out to look at everything that comes up new, he explains all about the awakening of Nature, his eyes almost have tears in them he loves it so. He seems to feel the things are alive like people.

I feel about ten years older than I did when . . . a month ago I mean. All that part of my life is like a dream, I only think of my darling little girl now. I must be getting more like they want me to be because I can think of Mr. Leonard without getting excited. Not that I forgive him . . . that I never expect to do, I just mean I feel different.

I am as sure as can be that if I had had the advantages of a good education it would help me to think all this out. I try so hard but there are so many things I can't seem to get clear. I am begin-

ning to see that Mr. Leonard's ideas about things—I mean even if he hadn't deserted me—are wrong and Mr. Higginson's are right. I don't mean that I think I did wrong personally, that they can never make me feel. I mean about legal marriages. Being married in the sight of God may be all very well if you don't have children, even then it might be all right if the men couldn't walk off and leave you. You see I broke a law and the part I can't get clear on is that it is going to be my precious little girl that's got to bear the butt of it. She who is going to be as pure as an angel will really be a . . . no, I can't write that word. When she gets big enough to go to school if anyone calls her that I know I will try and kill them. There I go getting all excited and I mustn't, Mrs. Flanagan says it is bad for *her*.

April 24.

Oh, I am going to be so good to her and make her love me so much that she can forgive me even for bringing this curse on her. I am going to teach her lots of things nobody ever taught me.

If ever any man comes around and tries . . . how foolish I am, getting in a stew about when she is a young lady when I haven't a name ready for her yet. I'm a fine kind of a mother.

I wish I could think of a name for her. It would be such a comfort to speak of her to myself by it. I like the idea of naming children after somebody, the trouble is I don't know anybody with a good enough name. I don't suppose anybody would like her named for them under the circumstances anyhow, that is anyone who knew it.

April 28.

It's nearly May day. I haven't long to wait now. Miss Lucy will be home soon too. How I have enjoyed her letters, she says she has enjoyed mine too.

I suddenly had an inspiration about my baby's name. I was thinking of names and saying over all I thought pretty. Somhow my mind drifted to queens' names and like a flash I thought of that dear little Queen of Holland and how long she waited for a baby. They say she is awfully domestic and like as not she made her own baby's clothes and sat while she was sewing and thought of her baby and imagined what it would be like just like I do. I kind of thought that even if she did know all about me she wouldn't mind having Baby named after her. She looks so kind.

Wilhelmina! It's a pretty name, it will

be inspiring for my daughter to be named for a Queen. I do favor two names though so while I was thinking of Queens my mind flew to the beautiful Queen of Spain who nearly got blown up by a bomb on her wedding day. She looks nice to me, not a bit stuck up. I always took to her husband too. I like his face. He just looks like a human being, most Kings look so proud. Their pictures I mean. Not having been to Europe I never saw one. Her name is Victoria. I was about deciding on calling her Wilhelmina Victoria when I thought it sounded too much like one of those North German Lloyd steamboats. That kind of discouraged me but I put it the other way around and it sounds just beautiful. Victoria Wilhelmina, that's her name, to think she's named after two Queens. Won't she be proud?

May 5.

Mr. Higginson and Miss Lucy (I simply must get used to calling her Mrs. Higginson) are home. She telephoned to me yesterday, said she was coming up very soon to see me; she was so kind and said they were so glad to know how happy I had grown about my baby. I can't realize that I used to feel the way I did. When I told her what I had named her she said she thought it was beautiful, she didn't see how I could have chosen a lovelier one.

I have almost all my sewing done. I take the things out a dozen times a day just to look at. I am so happy. I can hardly wait.

I feel so peaceful these days. I feel so different, I can't explain what I mean. I don't hate Mr. Leonard any more. It all came to me one night that it would be

just as well to begin to hate myself a little, that would keep me busy enough. I have been trying to write something down for several days but I just couldn't. I will now, *I knew all the time I was doing wrong!* There I have said it. Way inside me I knew it, I kept telling myself it was all right and I almost believed. I never did, I fully realize it now. How Min used to say, "These girls who say they were led astray and didn't know they were doing wrong most all mean they are fooling themselves."

I wasn't a bad girl, I know it, I just did a bad thing. If I was a bad girl I wouldn't burn with shame when I think of it all. I have paid up.

Oh, God, forgive, forgive me. I knew it was wrong but didn't know how wrong. I couldn't do it now. Oh, God, believe me and help me to forget. I'm punished

enough. What wouldn't I go throug undo it. That's the awful part, you n can. Girls don't realize that. All life will be spent to make up to my ling for it all and to become worthy her mother. Then she may forgive Oh, she must, I couldn't stand it if didn't, I will try so hard.

I feel so queer, I guess I will stop go out on the porch and sit awhile.

IV

June 5.

FROM my window I can see the rose garden, there seems to be miles of crimson rambler rose vines leading to the big house. The trees look so green and beautiful. It's the kind of day people say, "It's good to be alive." And I am here sitting looking at it all wondering how I am going to bear to live now that my little girl has gone.

On the sixth of May she was born and on the next day she died and I was alone. Oh, if I could only have gone with her! it would have been so easy, I was so ill. It can't be wicked to wish it, it isn't as if I had anyone to live for. All my good friends don't want me to die of

course. I mean there is nobody in the world who needs me now.

Miss Filmore says I can't write any more it does make me feel light-headed.

June 6.

I WANT to write all about it so I guess the best thing is to begin and do a little at a time. Miss Filmore doesn't like me to do much as she thinks it excites me. She has been so kind to me I like to do as she wants me to. Except that I get tired so easy I would write all the time, it kind of calms me.

You see it was this way. The baby came too soon and didn't have her full strength.

I was sitting on the porch, it doesn't seem possible it was only a month ago, and suddenly I felt so badly I called for Mrs. Flanagan. She sent off for the

doctor; she was so comforting, kept telling me to never mind, just keep thinking of the baby. I just knew what was going to happen. I tried not to feel scared, I said over to myself that part of the Bible that says about women forgetting how they have suffered as soon as they know their child is born. It kept my courage up. The doctor came and brought the nurse. I guess it is fortunate that no one can realize what that kind of suffering is like. It's queer but when it is over you forget how it was. How dreadful it must be to go through that if you didn't want the baby.

The doctor had to work hard to make my darling live at all. How can I ever thank him?

First I was kind of dazed, just happy to know she was a girl. Every once in a while it used to flash over me that she

might be a boy, I would have had to do all my planning over again. I was so comfortable to be free from pain. I took a nap and when I woke up there was Miss Lucy sitting by me. When she saw I was awake she jumped right up, got the baby and put it in my arms, saying, "Victoria Wilhelmina, I want to introduce you to my friend and your mother!" Miss Lucy is a great hand for jokes. . . . I don't suppose even an author could *tell* how it feels to hold your own baby in your arms for the first time. You never could imagine it, and you never could forget it. I suppose it is the reward God gives mothers. As I snuggled her up to me—Miss Lucy went over by the window and left us two alone—my heart filled so with love that there was no room for anything else. No room even to hate that man. I forgave him. She was so soft and smelled

so sweet, like the scent bags and yet different, just a baby smell, I guess.

June 9.

My nurse went to-day. I bet I will miss her, she is so kind. I can never forget all she did for my baby. It must be a lovely thing to be a nurse.

I forgot so many things. I was so weak and all that happened dazed me so. Miss Lucy—I can't remember how—made me understand that my precious baby wasn't strong, she thought it would be nice to have her christened right off. Mr. Higginson happened to be downstairs so he came up and did it. Miss Lucy and Mrs. Flanagan were her Godmothers and the doctor was her Godfather. I was so proud, I didn't get on to the fact that they knew she was going to die, I never thought of that.

After it was over I took a long nap, it was night when I woke up. Then I only seem to remember Miss Lucy on her knees with her arms around me. She kissed me, that completed my happiness; I knew then she didn't feel I was unfit any longer.

She told me the baby was very ill and the doctor was afraid she would never get well. Even then I didn't get it through my head for a long time.

They put my little daughter in my arms and I held her till the last. I think then I fainted because I don't remember when they took her away from my arms.

June 11.

Miss Lucy stayed the next day. I was so glad as there were lots of things I wanted to know and didn't like to ask anyone else.

Always I had hoped my girlie's hair would be golden and her eyes brown. She only had a little hair and it looked kind of red to me. Her eyes were hardly open, they looked blue though. Miss Lucy said her hair looked reddish golden to her and no doubt would have grown less red all the time. She thought her eyes did look blue but she says loads of babies are born with blue eyes that turn brown. Not that I wouldn't have loved her just the same but it is a comfort to know she would have looked just as I hoped.

June 12.

Miss Filmore and Miss Lucy dressed her to be buried; she wore her prettiest dress. Miss Lucy gave me two pearl pins she bought for her in Paris. They put one on her and I kept the other. I was too weak to remember much. Mr.

Higginson read the service. Miss Lucy went with him to the grave, it was such a comfort to have them go. She came back to tell me about it and then went back to New York.

June 14.

It did seem as if I would never get strong again. The time didn't go as slow as you would think. Mrs. Flanagan and the nurse read to me so much; they played some games too as I got stronger. They brought over the grand phonograph from the big house; I certainly enjoyed lying in bed listening to those opera singers. The funny songs were good too. . . .

June 15.

The first day I sat up Miss Lucy came up to see me, she looked so pretty and so happy. I had been waiting to see her to ask her what I had better do with Victoria

Wilhelmina's clothes. Of course I will always keep one set, always, always. I was telling her I didn't like to offer them to anyone for fear they would feel my things were kind of disgraced. She smiled such a lovely smile, put her arms right around me, "Annie, you can give them to me for my baby." My, I was surprised, I had never thought of it. We had a lovely talk about it. It's coming in December. She hadn't told me as she thought it might make me sad. It doesn't, I am just so glad for her. I hope it will come well and strong. Just think of her saying she would be *proud* to have her baby wear Victoria Wilhelmina's things! I didn't know to put it on paper how happy that made me.

June 20.

I DON'T suppose you care what heaven is like unless you have someone there.

Of course I have Papa and Mama and all my sisters and brothers, somehow they don't seem to belong to me—that sounds awful but it's true. I mean someone that is really yours.

Mr. Higginson came to see me to-day, I didn't know that a man could be so gentle and kind. I asked him to tell me what heaven was like, of course I knew he couldn't tell *exactly* but I was disappointed at how little he *knew* about it, the things he did know gave me so much comfort though.

So many nights I used to wake up having an awful dream. I dreamed my little darling was going to school—she always looked so cute too—and someone yelled that word at her! When I was so sick I didn't dream it but it came back and I was afraid it was a warning or something. I got up the courage to tell

Mr. Higginson. It doesn't so much matter how I feel but I did want to be sure no one would call her that where she is now. He said the dream wasn't a warning; then he explained to me why I dreamed it, it is because I keep thinking of it even when I don't realize.

I can hear his kind voice, "Annie, don't ever for one minute doubt your little girl has gone somewhere where she is better off than any of us could make her. Be sure that anyone cruel enough to cast a slur on her isn't where she is. I feel sure she is a very proud, happy little girl up there." Then he smiled and looked the way he and Miss Lucy do when they say things I don't quite understand, "You know we all have a mission in this world. Your little girl has accomplished hers, accomplished what all of us had tried to do and failed. She took a woman down to

the depths and led her up on the heights and there showed her a great light, do you wonder she is a proud baby?" I didn't quite understand but didn't like to ask, it seemed stupid of me.

He went away leaving me feeling very happy. Oh, my baby, your mother is going to try and wipe out the past!

June 21.

Miss Lucy gave me the loveliest present to-day, a beautiful framed photograph of both my queens. How proud my baby would be to know she was named for them. I keep looking and looking at them and can't make out which one I like the best. Victoria is the most beautiful and the swellest looking person I ever saw, there is no mistake about that. On the other hand Wilhelmina looks like, well I can't tell what I mean. Not like

a queen a bit, not that I ever saw a queen but what I picture one to look like, but just like a lady who has had trouble herself. I kind of feel if she knew all about me she would understand.

I go out driving a good deal, it's so lovely all around here. It won't be long now before Miss Lucy (I've given up trying to write Mrs. Higginson, I do remember to *call* her that) comes up for the summer. She wanted to stay in town all summer with Mr. Higginson but the doctor and Mr. Higginson and her father won't let her, he can come up here nights.

I am so anxious to get to work, I feel strong enough now; I don't like to ask as it may seem ungrateful to seem to hurry their plans.

June 22.

VICTORIA WILHELMINA is over a month and a half old. The more I think, it

seems I don't think of much else either, how safe she is, the more I feel I am almost glad she went away. Yes, I think I am glad, it would be selfish not to be.

Just before she died, when I was holding her close to me, I whispered to her and told her all about it. I don't suppose she really understood but I didn't want to deceive her. Maybe I imagined it but I thought she smiled at me as if she understood how penitent I was and forgave me.

Mr. Higginson says the right way to judge people is not to rake up their past but to judge by what they are to-day and what they are trying to do to-morrow. That's the way they do but I am afraid there are very few like them in the world. I have made a rule for my future and I guess I will be all right if I stick to it. It is never to do or say a thing I wouldn't

do or say if my little girl was in my arms. I *must* get to where she is some day and I have so much to live down. With seeing her as a reward it won't be hard, nothing would.

The more I think the more it seems this way. You can't sin that way, no matter what you call it or what you pretend it is, without running the chance of bringing a soul into the world that has to suffer for your sin. There is no getting around it, the child is looked down on by people as a . . . I can't write it, it's too cruel. Oh! before girls go wrong why don't they stop and think what it is to bring a child into the world that can be called that, and *have to stand it because it's true.* All the books and talk there is on such things seems only to remind girls that they will die in the gutter. It seems to me there must be girls who

would take their chance on that who wouldn't want to give a life-long shame to a dear little baby.

Yes, I am glad my baby's gone where she is safe. The awful lonesomeness I feel isn't anything to seeing *her* suffer for one minute because *I* sinned. I can think about her and live for her just the same. Her little soul will be near me always, I know that. I can do things for other babies too, I began by sending two dollars to the Fresh Air Fund yesterday.

June 30.

I CAN'T go to bed until I have written about the wonderful thing that has happened to me to-day. Miss Lucy sent for me to go up to the big house to see her. I hadn't been there before, it's simply grand but just as homelike as can be. She took me all around, showed me her

old nurseries, they are going to be fixed up for her baby. She wants a boy most, not that she cares so much but she says her father would be too happy for words if he could go around saying "my grandson."

She took me in her sitting-room. It is a big cool room with awnings and wicker furniture. It's all light green and white, it looks just like you would know her room would look.

She made me sit in a long chair, the kind you put your feet up on, and the butler brought in iced tea and cake. Then she began to talk and asked me if I had any special idea what I wanted to do. Somehow the idea of tending a telephone again made me sick all over. I told her I thought I could learn typewriting quick and I would rather get work with some lady. She laughed right out and said,

"Annie, you are a mind-reader," and tossed me a letter. I nearly dropped dead, it was in dear old Min's handwriting! My hands shook so I could hardly open it. I did finally. I didn't deserve it, I know that.

It seems she knew all along, I mean since Miss Lucy found me. The letter was to tell me she was just as good a friend of mine as ever—dear Min—and wanted me to learn typewriting as she could get me a job with two lovely lady authoresses who wanted a helper. I must be ready in August. She wants me to come and board with them. She added, "I want you to help take care of Baby." Imagine me taking care of Min's baby, maybe she will let me bathe it sometimes when she is busy. Harry added a postscript of welcome. And I used to think him slow and wonder how Min thought

him so grand. That time seems a thousand years ago.

When I got through I couldn't help crying, I started to tell Miss Lucy how I felt but I broke right down again, she cried too. It was kind of funny when we were both so happy. Then she began to kind of laugh and said if Mr. Higginson should come in and find us both crying she didn't know what he would do. So we both laughed and had some more tea. Then I went home. It hardly seems as if it can be true. I know it is of course. Just think this morning I didn't know I would ever see Min again, now I am going to live with her, and her blessed baby.

July 15.

A GIRL in the village is teaching me how to do typewriting, I am getting on awful quick and like it so much. That

and my sewing keeps me busy. I wrote to Min of course and got a photograph from her of the boy, his name is Harry Junior. A handsomer baby I never saw. Wasn't it cute? on the back of the picture was some scribbling. Min wrote under it "this means hurry up Aunt Annie and come to see me." I got the stuff and began to make a dress for my nephew! It will be his first short one, she is going to wait to put him in them until I get there.

I am kind of glad he is a boy. If he had been a girl it might have made me too homesick for Victoria Wilhelmina. Oh, little daughter, your Mother is going to try so hard to make you proud of her!

August 3.

I AM all packed and my tickets bought. Such kindness as they have all shown me. Miss Lucy gave me some lovely thin

dresses, Mr. Higginson two books to read on the train, Mrs. Flanagan made me a kimona and Mr. Flanagan gave me some money to buy magazines on the train. The greatest surprise was Miss Lucy's father sent me a beautiful hand bag, in the little pocket-book was twenty-five dollars. I hope when I thanked them they knew how grateful I am, it seems harder to make people understand the very things you feel most.

No one knows how I feel to leave the Flanagans. They have been like a father and mother to me, I mean like the kind I have always imagined.

Mrs. is going to New York with me to see me safe on the train and Min will meet me. Then I begin my new life. Annie Wilson again, about a year from the time I gave it up. Just one year and yet I feel twenty years

older. I am sadder and wiser and happier all together in a way I can't explain to myself, let alone writing it down.

Miss Lucy says each year the nightmare part will grow less and the Victoria Wilhelmina part more plain. I pray so hard to forget that first part.

Mrs. Flanagan is calling that it is time to get ready, good-by, my dear, true friends. God bless you all.

Come, little daughter, it is time for you and me to start.

THE END